

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9726

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 00650

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK

SUBJECT: THOUGHTS ON THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL AND
INTERNAL TALKS

1. THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL IS THE RESULT OF
CONSULTATIONS HELD WITH ALL OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED,
AND AS I HAVE ALWAYS INSISTED, IT WOULD MORE ACCURATELY
BE DESCRIBED AS AN ANGLO, AFRICAN-AMERICAN PROPOSAL.
WHEN PRESIDENT CARTER MET IN AUGUST OF 1977 WITH PRESIDENT
NYERERE HE WAS COMMITTED TO A PLAN FOR THE ORDERLY TRANS-
FER OF POWER FROM THE MINORITY TO THE MAJORITY THAT
WOULD END THE WARFARE AND PROVIDE FOR FREE AND FAIR
ELECTIONS. IT WAS TO BE A PLAN THAT WOULD ALLOW THE
BRITISH TO RESUME POWER AND TO PERFORM ITS RIGHTFUL ROLE
OF BRINGING ABOUT AN INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE. AT ONE TIME
OR ANOTHER, ALL OF THE NATIONALISTS HAVE INSISTED THAT
THIS WAS NECESSARY AND DESIRED. THE ANGLO-AMERICAN
PROPOSAL RECEIVED ITS AFRICAN, FRONTLINE, AND
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INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT BECAUSE IT WAS SEEN AS FAIR AND NO
ONE PARTY HAD A VETO--NOT SMITH OR THE NATIONALISTS.

2. WHEN WE STARTED THE FIRST ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS ON THE
PROPOSAL AUGUST 26, 1977, THE PRESS SPECULATED THAT THE
PROPOSAL WAS DESIGNED TO FAIL AND THAT ULTIMATELY THE
BRITISH WOULD THROW UP THEIR HANDS SAYING THAT THEY HAD

MADE AN HONEST ATTEMPT AND WOULD THEN ABANDON THE PROPOSAL TO AN INTERNAL ARRANGEMENT. I BELIEVE THAT THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL IS ALIVE AND STILL RELEVANT, AND THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE UK AND THE US BE THE LAST TO ABANDON THIS SPECIFIC NEGOTIATED APPROACH.

3. THE QUESTION THAT THIS RAISES IS HOW CAN THE UK AND US CONTINUE TO PURSUE THE PROPOSAL WHEN SMITH, MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE APPEAR TO BE PURSUING THE INTERNAL APPROACH AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT IS RELUCTANT TO MOVE FORWARD.

4. IN ALL OF OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE WE MUST EMPHASIZE OUR CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO THE PROPOSAL AND COMMENT ON AREAS THAT ARE BEING DISCUSSED INTERNALLY WHERE THERE WOULD BE DIFFICULTY RECONCILING WITH THE PROPOSAL SUCH AS THE GOVERNING COUNCIL, FUTURE ZIMBABWE ARMY, TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS, ELECTION PROCESS, ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

5. WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO PUSH THE FRONTLINE TO KEEP THE PRESSURE ON THE PF TO PURSUE AGREEMENT ON TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS ON SPECIFIC DETAILS OF THE CONSTITUTION DRAFTING AND PUBLISH IT TO BE SCRUTINIZED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

6. WE SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO UNLEASH LORD CARVER AND PREM CHAND AND THEIR RESPECTIVE STAFFS
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TO SHUTTLE BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN ALL OF THE PARTIES, SPECIFYING DETAILS.

7. I THINK IT MOST IMPORTANT THAT THE UK AND US BE PREPARED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT TO INVITE THE NEWLY-PRESENTED INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO A MEETING TO PROCEED WITH THE PROCESS OF TRANSFER OF POWER.

8. IN SEPTEMBER, 1977 WE COMPLETELY IGNORED THE INTERNAL ELECTIONS AND ARRIVED IN SALISBURY PREPARED TO DISCUSS OUR PROPOSAL IN DETAIL. ON THE EVE OF AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT, THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL WILL BE AS RELEVANT AS IT WAS THEN. WHILE IN MALTA I GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD NOT MIND THE FORMAL EXISTENCE OF A NEW INTERIM GOVERNMENT THAT BROUGHT SMITH TOGETHER WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE, OR SMITH WITH SITHOLE, LEAVING MUZOREWA TO BE PICKED UP BY THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. NKOMO SEEMED TO HINT THAT IF THE CARDS WERE CUT INTO SIMPLY "US" AND "THEM" THERE WOULD STILL BE A NEED FOR THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL.

9. HOWEVER, I AGREE WITH AMBASSADOR LOW (REFTEL LUSAKA 533) THAT AN APPROACH BY THE BRITISH OR THE US WOULD STIMULATE DERISION AS WELL AS MISTRUST AND DISILLUSIONMENT. WITH THE SUPPORT THAT WE ENJOY FROM TANZANIA, MOZAMBIQUE, NIGERIA AND ANGOLA FOR THE PROPOSAL, WE CANNOT AFFORD TO FLIRT AROUND WITH THE INTERNAL DISCUSSIONS. STRONG AND CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE UK/US PLAN STRENGTHENS MUZOREWA'S AND SITHOLE'S HANDS INSIDE. EVERYTIME THAT I HAVE TALKED

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WITH SITHOLE OR MUZOREWA THEY HAVE PRESSED ME AS TO OUR COMMITMENT TO THE PROPOSAL. THE MOST RECENT CONVERSATION WAS A TELEPHONE CALL TO THE BISHOP IN SALISBURY AT 6:00 AM (SALISBURY TIME) ON FEBRUARY 17, 1978.

10. US INTEREST IS SERVED BY OUR STRICT CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR OUR OWN PROPOSAL, AND IF WE ARE FORCED TO ACCEPT SOMETHING LESS WE SHOULD ONLY DO SO WHEN IT IS OBVIOUSLY APPARENT THAT WE ARE RIDING A DEAD HORSE. IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT WE STILL HAVE PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT TO NIGERIA COMING UP AND PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S VISIT TO THE US. BOTH OF THESE VISITS WILL NO DOUBT LEND THEMSELVES TO OPPORTUNITY TO INJECT THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF THE PRESIDENCY INTO THIS FORMULATION.

11. IN CONCLUSION, IF IT IS THE US GOVERNMENT'S DESIGN
TO STICK WITH THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL IF AND WHEN AN
INTERNAL SETTLEMENT TAKES PLACE THAT IS DESIGNED TO
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EXCLUDE ELEMENTS OF THE NATIONALISTS, THEN AT THE
EARLIEST HOUR WE SHOULD SAY SO IN THE CLEAREST TERMS TO
OUR PARTNERS, THE BRITISH. I WOULD THINK THAT SOME
OF THE VACILATION WE SEE IN UK STATEMENTS IS SIMPLY BECAUSE
THEY HAVE ASSUMED WE ARE STILL FLEXIBLE ON THIS ISSUE.
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